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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KING of Iowa).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 23, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVE KING to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY).

COMPETING VISIONS

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, this week the House will take up the budget resolution for fiscal year 2005. This is the document that will set the terms for much of the national debate in this very pivotal year. Issues as unrelated as tax cuts and homeland security, law enforcement and space exploration, and the deficit and the international democracy and diplomacy will all be affected by this budget.

Anyone who believes there are no real differences between the two parties should watch this week's debate, read the competing budget proposals,

and see how stark these differences really are.

The Republican budget is built on the principles of strength, growth, and opportunity. To secure our Nation and win the war on terror, it increases defense spending by 7 percent; it provides for more than \$33 billion in non-military homeland security initiatives to fund America's first responders, law enforcement officers and the every day heroes who keep our communities safe.

The Republican budget will provide the framework by which Congress can help maintain the economic recovery. It will protect the economy from targeted snap-back tax increases on parents, married couples, and the working class. Our budget will anchor Federal spending by freezing all nonsecurity discretionary spending growth giving the economy breathing room to grow, create jobs, and cut the deficit.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the budget will meet all our domestic needs, from health care and education to welfare reform and veterans benefits without leaving any priority behind. The Republican budget speaks clearly to the issues facing our Nation this year.

And to their credit, so does the Democrat's budget. Unfortunately, their budgets, while clear, are just wrong. In not one budget, but in three separate budgets, the minority party will propose job-killing tax increases, more spending, and bigger government as the solutions to our Nation's problems.

The differences between the parties' visions could not be more clear. Democrats trust government, and Republicans trust the American people. This week we will see which vision prevails in this debate and in the minds of the American people.

DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Janu-

ary 20, 2004, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, it has been nearly 8 years since Congress overwhelmingly passed the Defense of Marriage Act in 1996. DOMA, as it is called, passed the Senate by a vote of 85-14 and the House by a vote of 342-67. I was honored to have cosponsored and vote for final passage of this bipartisan legislation which President Clinton signed into law.

We passed DOMA in response to a State court decision because we were concerned that activist judges in Hawaii would force 49 other States to accept gay marriages. We clarified the full faith and credit clause to mean that States do not need to recognize same-sex marriages performed and validated in other States.

At the time, DOMA was a reasonable response to a real problem. Nobody wanted a handful of judges overturning the will of the individual States and millions of American citizens. DOMA relied on the principle of federalism to defend States rights and to preserve the sanctity of marriage. It was a perfect match.

But several momentous events occurred in the next few years which have put DOMA in a difficult light. In 1997 and 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned two duly enacted States' laws regarding homosexuals. In the Lawrence case, the Court even went so far as to overturn one of its previous decisions. More recently, the Supreme Court and other Federal courts have even blatantly disregarded the 2000 Dale decision which gave the Boy Scouts the right to exclude avowed homosexuals from positions of leadership.

In Vermont, the State Supreme Court ordered the State legislature to provide the benefits of marriage to gay couples. Finally, gay marriages have been legalized in several Canadian provinces. These decisions have given

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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